

Claim Amendments

Claim 1 (currently amended): A switch for switching packets, each packet having a length, comprising:

a port card which receives packets from and sends packets to a network; and

fabrics connected to the port card which switch the packets, the port card sending stripes of corresponding fragments of each packet to the fabrics, each fabric having a memory mechanism, each fabric having a mechanism for determining the length of each packet received by the fabric and placing a length indicator with the packet so when the packet is stored in the memory mechanism, the determining mechanism can identify from the length indicator how long the packet is and where the packet ends in the memory mechanism.

Claim 2 (currently amended): A switch as described in Claim 1 wherein the determining mechanism includes an aggregator which receives the stripes of the packet fragments from the port card, determines the packet length and appends packet length information to the beginning of the packet in the length indicator.

Claim 3 (original): A switch as described in Claim 2 wherein the memory mechanism includes a memory controller, the aggregator sending the packet with the packet length information to the memory controller which stores the packet with the packet length information.

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Claim 4 (original): A switch as described in Claim 3 wherein the memory controller has a memory which has a wide cache buffer structure in which multiple packets are put into one word.

Claim 5 (currently amended): A switch as described in Claim 4 wherein the fabric includes a separator which reads the stripes of fragments of packets from the memory controller and extracts the packet length information from each stripe of fragments of packet to determine when each packet ends, and sends fragments of the packet to the port card, the port card assembling the packet from the stripes of the fragments of the packet the port card receives from the fabrics.

Claim 6 (currently amended): A switch as described in Claim 5 wherein the separator removes the packet length information from each packet before sending any stripes of fragments of each packet to an unstriper of the port card.

Claim 7 (currently amended): A method for switching packets having a length comprising the steps of:

receiving a packet at a port card of a switch;

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sending corresponding fragments of the packet as stripes to fabrics of the switch  
from the port card;

receiving the stripes of corresponding fragments of the packet at the fabrics of  
the switch;

measuring the length of the packet at each fabric from the stripes of fragments  
of the packet received at each fabric;

appending a length indicator to the packet;

storing the packet with the length indicator in a memory mechanism of the  
fabric;

reading the packet from the memory mechanism; and

determining where the packet ends from the length indicator of the packet.

Claim 8 (currently amended): A method as described in Claim 7 wherein the ~~receiving~~ step of receiving the fragments includes the step of receiving the ~~fragment~~ fragments at an aggregator of each of the fabric.

Claim 9 (original): A method as described in Claim 8 wherein the measuring step includes the step of measuring the length of the packet with the aggregator.

Claim 10 (original): A method as described in Claim 9 wherein the appending step includes the step of the appending the length indicator to the packet with the aggregator.

Claim 11 (original): A method as described in Claim 10 wherein the storing step includes the step of storing the packet with the length indicator in a memory controller of the memory mechanism.

Claim 12 (original): A method as described in Claim 11 wherein the reading step includes the step of reading the packet from the memory controller with a separator of the fabric.

Claim 13 (original): A method as described in Claim 12 wherein the determining step includes the step of determining where a packet ends from the length indicator with the separator.

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Claim 14 (currently amended): A method as described and Claim 13 including after the determining step, there is the step of removing the packet length information ~~[[from]]~~ with the separator.

Claim 15 (currently amended): A method as described in Claim 14 including after the removing step, there is the step of sending stripes of fragments of the packets from the separator to the port card.

Claim 16 (currently amended): A method as described in Claim 15 wherein the sending fragments step includes the step of sending fragments of the packet to the port card in a same logical time with corresponding fragments of the packet from other fabrics to the port card.

Claim 17 (original): A method as described in Claim 16 wherein the storing step includes the step of storing the fragments of the packet in a memory of the memory

controller which has a wide cache buffer structure in which multiple packets are put into one word.

Claim 18 (currently amended): A method as described in Claim 17 including after the reading step, there is the step of extracting the packet length information from the packet with ~~[[a]]~~ the separator.

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Claim 19 (currently amended): A method as described in Claim 18 wherein ~~the receiving step includes the~~ there is a step of receiving the stripes of fragments of the packet from the fabrics with an unstriper of the port card.

Claim 20 (currently amended): A method as described in Claim 19 wherein the sending stripes of fragments of the packet to the fabric step includes the step of sending the stripes of fragments of the packet with a striper of the port card to the aggregator of each fabric ~~the fragments of the packet~~.

Claim 21 (original): A method as described in Claim 20 wherein the step of sending fragments to the port card includes the step of sending fragments from the separator to an unstriper of the port card.